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Annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development

Statement submitted by Mumbai Educational Trust, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2008/100.

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Statement

MET has been offering high technology based professional programmes for over a decade. We are presenting key innovations in conformation of our commitment to sustainable development while implementing MDGs.

Implementation of agreed Goals to Ensure Environmental Sustainability:

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources
- Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation
- Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

In India now after a decade of liberalization, a stable platform for accelerated development has been built. But in order to ensure environmental sustainability, appropriate tools and technologies need to be introduced in rural and urban areas to achieve the MDGs, especially no. 7. Through Project-TRUTH and MUSEQ – Vidya Setu/Vidya Shakti, students and faculty of MET are networking to implement a pilot project in this direction.

A. Project-TRUTH

Under Project-TRUTH, self-sustained employment generating eco-system conservation based programmes are designed to bring about attainment of MDGs, especially MDG No. 7 through innovative interventions.

The project-TRUTH attempts to holistically develop indigenous people through the following key Innovations:

a) Popularizing sheep/goat rearing based on local forage resources – 200 beneficiary families
b) Training and building eco-friendly fish culture farms– 150 beneficiary families
c) Generating farm motive power by gasification of locally grown weeds – pilot plant

B. MUSEQ - VIDYA SETU/ VIDYA SHAKTI

MET has developed a unique programme, MUSEQ – Vidya Setu/Vidya Shakti, based on networking of youth with the underprivileged sections of the society in Mumbai suburb area. It seeks to reach out to the poorest of the poor and deprived urban sections in the vicinity. The half a million strong students/ faculty community of the university in Mumbai will hopefully reach out to the underprivileged masses. MET has already completed a pilot in Bandra - Vidya Setu/Vidya Shakti – A Knowledge Bridge for Societal Bonding. Since the programme is based on voluntary input, students are entitled to get credits for their work. This year MET students have covered 1750 families under the programme in the vicinity of the institution.

The Key Innovations used are:

a) Benchmark survey to register the underprivileged - 1750 families
b) Designed and implemented Vidya-Shakti – a job opportunity fair for the underprivileged
c) Developed a unique platform – *Career Sans Barriers* bringing NGOs, corporations and voluntary agencies together.

Through these innovations, MET has been implementing the pilot projects. Project-TRUTH and Vidya Setu, confirming our commitment to "The internationally agreed Goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development". Since these have been circulated by the Secretary General of UN, we hope and pray that similar projects are taken up elsewhere to develop urban and rural areas.